



## South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



### OPEN HOUSE AT SFVAHCS

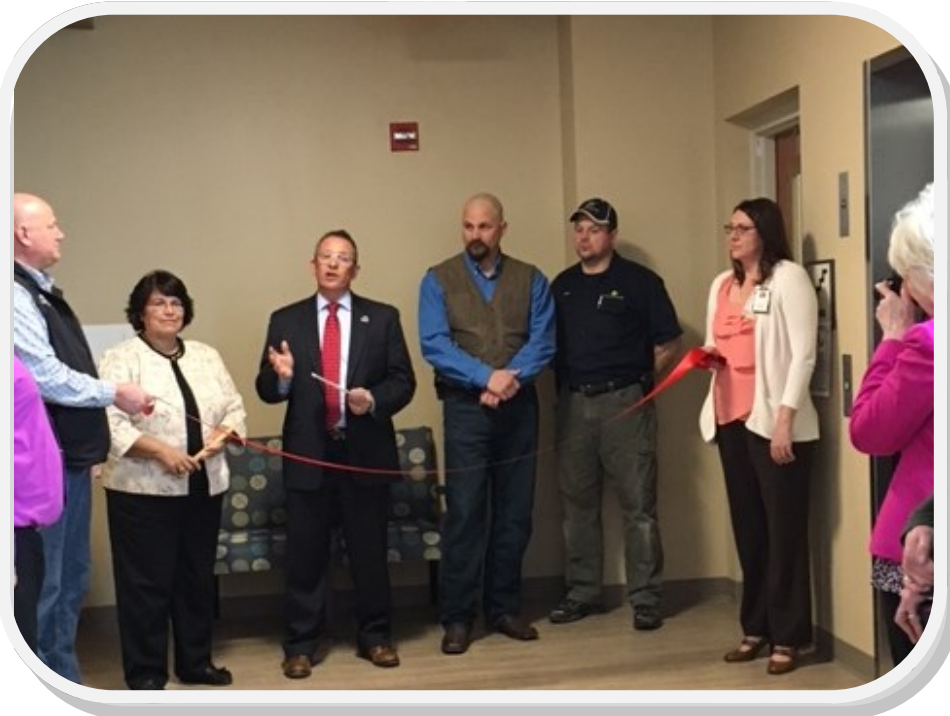
The Sioux Falls VA Medical Center hosted an open house Tuesday for their new primary care addition. Primary Care staff and their PACT (Primary Care Aligned Teams) neighbors showcased the Primary Care addition at the Sioux Falls VA campus.

In addition, a veterans benefits Fair was held with representatives from a wide variety of medical center services on hand to visit with veterans and their families about what the VA has to offer them. Veterans benefits and the Sioux Falls Vet Center were on hand to explain their collaboration with VHA staff in providing for the needs of veterans.

SDDVA Program Manager Erin Brown represented the Department at the ribbon cutting ceremony and participated in the tour of the new addition.

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## ZIMMERMAN AND POLLARD ATTEND NASDVA CONFERENCE

SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman and Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard attended the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs conference in Washington, DC this week.

During the conference, directors were briefed on veterans benefits, memorial affairs, outreach, homelessness, healthcare, state veterans homes, veterans transition and employment, women and minority veterans, VA transformation, National Cemetery, VHA, geriatrics and long-term care, My VA, and eDD214.

Leadership of the VA and NASDVA signed an MOA for the two groups to continue to work together.

Former VA Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson and former VA Secretary Robert McDonald attended the NASDVA Conference and were recognized by NASDVA for their dedication and leadership.

Zimmerman and Pollard were able to visit with Sena-

tors John Thune and Mike Rounds and Representative Kristi Noem while in DC.

Shoyab Hakimi, who served as Secretary Zimmerman's interpreter while he was in Afghanistan, was the uber driver for Secretary Zimmerman and Deputy Secretary Pollard while they were in DC. Shoyab Ha-

kimi has been in DC since 2008 and has been a citizen of the United States for two years. He has obtained a two-year degree in political science and is currently working on his four-year degree.





## BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month & Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard has signed an executive proclamation proclaiming March Brain Injury Awareness Month in South Dakota to promote public awareness of the extent, causes, consequences, treatment and prevention of traumatic brain injury.

In addition, in observance of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, he encourages all citizens to support opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities including full access to education, housing, employment and recreational activities.

According to the Brain Injury Association of America, each year an estimated 2.5 million children and adults in the United States sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI), and another 795,000 individuals sustain an acquired brain injury (ABI) from non-traumatic causes. TBIs can affect the functionality of the brain—affecting thinking, reasoning, and memory. Whether the victim is an adult, a child, an infant, or a veteran, TBIs can have a major impact on individuals and their families.

To raise awareness of traumatic brain injury, the Brain Injury Association of America recognizes National Brain Injury Awareness Month every March. The NCTSN offers the following resources on traumatic brain injury for families, medical professionals, and military families.



## DAVIDSON CONTINUES HONORING HEROES

Jessica Davidson, CVSO for Davison County, had the distinct honor of presenting one of our heroes with his Korean Ambassador Peace Medal.

SDDVA applauds Jessica's efforts to continue to find and honor these heroes.

SDDVA has requested more medals for any of our CTVSOs that discover more heroes in their respective area deserving of this recognition. Of course, we are not guaranteed we will receive them, so keep your fingers crossed.



## STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE TO HONOR CODE TALKERS

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe will be hosting an honoring ceremony for their Code Talkers. The ceremony will be held on Friday, March 17, 2017, at the Wakpala Public School (1200 SD HWY 1806). Doors open at noon and the program begins 1:00 pm.

SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman will serve as the keynote speaker.

Code Talkers that will be honored are: James W. Alkire, Henry A. Ankle, Sr., Wallace Cross Bear, Ambrose Gabe, Charles Has Horns, Jasper Iron Cloud, Edward A. Laframboise, Eli Little

Bird, Isaac Looking Back, George Loves War, Harry Loves the War, Edmund Many Deeds, Sr., Matthew Oka, Charles Red Bear, Benedict Red Legs, Jesse Taken Alive, and Eugene Walking Elk.

**Wanáǰma Wóglakapi**  
(Talking to Hide Things-Code Talkers)  
**Wičhóǰ'ą Wičhóǰ'ą**  
(Ceremony)

**CODE TALKERS:**

- James W. Alkire
- Henry A. Ankle, Sr.
- Wallace Cross Bear aka Walter Cross Bear
- Ambrose Gabe
- Charles Has Horns
- Jasper Iron Cloud
- Edward A. Laframboise
- Eli Little Bird
- Isaac Looking Back
- George Loves War
- Harry Loves the War
- Edmund Many Deeds, Sr.
- Matthew Oka
- Charles Red Bear
- Benedict Red Legs
- Jesse Taken Alive
- Eugene Walking Elk

**1300 hrs (1:00 pm)**  
**March 17, 2017**  
**Wakpala School Auditorium**  
**Wakpala, SD**

**CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL HONORING CEREMONY**

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe  
Department of Veterans Affairs

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## FORT MEADE OCS PROGRAM TO TEMPORARILY RELOCATE TO CAMP RAPID

The South Dakota Army National Guard's Officer Candidate School program based at Fort Meade will be temporarily relocated to Camp Rapid from March-July, due to several construction projects in facilities used by the program.

Members of the Rapid City community who live or work in the vicinity of Camp Rapid may notice an increase in noise level associated with OCS program ceremonies, traditions and training events.

The public can expect to hear Reveille and Retreat music to be played at 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. on the weekends of March 4-5; April 8-9; May 6-7; and daily from June 3-July 29 during OCS's accelerated program. The playing of Retreat at 5 p.m. will also be accompanied by loud simulated cannon fire.

Throughout July, the public can also expect to hear simulated small-arms fire and explosions as part of OCS training at the West Camp Rapid training area west of Stevens High School.

# Upcoming Events

Mar. 9—SFVAHCS Art Show—2nd Floor of the New Primary Care Addition (access using stairs or elevator from the front foyer of the medical center)  
Mar. 17—Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Code Talker Honoring Ceremony—Wakpala School Auditorium—1:00 pm  
Mar. 29—"Clay County's Fallen" Research Contest—USD School of Education—Room 118—Vermillion—5:00-8:00 pm (CT)  
Apr. 13—SFVAHCS Veterans Town Hall—Dakota Playhouse—DSU Campus—Madison—5:00 pm (CT) with Benefits Fair at 4:00 pm (CT)  
Apr. 19—SD Veterans Council Meeting—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)  
Apr 28-30—DAV Annual Convention—AmericInn—Fort Pierre  
Jun 15-18—SD American Legion State Conference—Watertown  
Jun 22-25—State VFW Convention—Pierre  
Aug. 14-17—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Pierre—Ramkota

Here's  
What's  
Happening!



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